

SECURITY INFORMATION

C E N T R A L I N T E L L I G E N C E A G E N C Y

12 January 1952

SUBJECT: TERMS OF REFERENCE: NIE-35/1: PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS  
IN INDOCHINA THROUGH MID-1952

THE PROBLEM

To estimate probable developments in Indochina through mid-1952 with particular emphasis on probable Chinese Communist courses of action in that area.

QUESTIONS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

I. FACTORS INFLUENCING CHINESE COMMUNIST POLICY TOWARD INDOCHINA

G-2, ONI  
and A-2

- A. What is the current military situation in Indochina?
  1. What is the relative military strength, combat effectiveness and tactical disposition of the French-Vietnamese and Viet Minh forces?
    - a. How have military operations in Tonkin during the past six months affected French-Vietnamese capabilities?
    - b. How have military operations in Tonkin during the past six months affected Viet Minh capabilities?

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- c. How have French-Vietnamese capabilities during the past six months been affected by:
  - i. French-Vietnamese progress in training, recruitment, etc.;
  - ii. US assistance.
- d. What is the present nature and level of Chinese Communist technical and materiel assistance to the Viet Minh? How has this assistance affected Viet Minh capabilities?

G-2, ONI  
and A-2

- B. What are the capabilities of the Chinese Communists to commit an increasing volume of assistance to the Viet Minh in the form of advisers, instructors, manpower (including Chinese tribesmen) incorporated in Viet Minh units, and materiel?
  - 1. Assuming present situation or an intensification of the fighting in Korea?
  - 2. Assuming an armistice in Korea?

G-2, ONI  
and A-2

- C. What are the capabilities of the Chinese Communists to commit major elements of their regular forces in Indochina?
  - 1. Assuming present situation or an intensification of the fighting in Korea?
    - a. What ground forces do the Chinese Communists have available for commitment to an invasion of Indochina?

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What is the level of training and equipment of these troops? How many troops can the Chinese Communists now support logistically in Indochina in sustained military operations?

- b. What air strength could the Chinese Communists commit to such an invasion? What airfields are available or could be made available and supported logistically for operational use?
- c. What naval and amphibious strength could the Chinese Communists commit to such an invasion?

2. Assuming an armistice in Korea:

- a. How many troops could the Chinese Communists support logistically in Indochina in sustained military operations?
- b. What air strength could the Chinese Communists commit to such an invasion?
- c. What naval and amphibious strength could the Chinese Communists commit to such an invasion?

G-2, ONI  
and A-2

- D. How would the capabilities of the Viet Minh forces be affected in the next six months if:
1. Chinese Communist technical and materiel assistance were maintained at approximately present nature and levels?
  2. Chinese Communist increase their present assistance programs over the next few months to the nature and levels envisioned in B 1 and B 2 above?

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3. Chinese Communists increase their present assistance to the nature and levels contemplated in C 1 and C 2 above.

C-2, ONI  
and A-2

- E. What are the present French-Vietnamese capabilities for defense against:
1. The Viet Minh alone, assuming a continuance of the present scale of Chinese Communist assistance?
  2. The Viet Minh alone, assuming the nature and level of Chinese Communist assistance contemplated in B above.
  3. The Viet Minh, assuming the nature and level of Chinese Communist assistance contemplated in C above.

- F. What trends in French-Vietnamese capabilities to resist Viet Minh-Chinese Communist pressure are probable through mid-1952?

C-2, ONI  
and A-2

1. In manpower and materiel supply (including scheduled US aid)?
2. In political strength and stability within Vietnam?
3. In the determination to resist:
  - a. Political and economic developments within France?
  - b. Political and economic developments within Indochina?

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OIR, G-2,  
ONI, and A-2

G. What is the importance of Indochina to the USSR and to  
Communist China?

1. From the point of view of dynamic international  
Communism?
  2. From the point of view of China's defense?
- H. What would be the influence on Chinese Communist courses  
of action with respect to Indochina of:
1. Developments in Korea?
  2. The requirements of internal consolidation in Communist  
China?
  3. A possible Chinese Communist belief that a more  
aggressive course in Indochina might incite UN or US  
counteraction in Indochina?
    - a. Substantially increased assistance to the Viet  
Minh, possibly including Chinese manpower in  
Viet Minh units?
    - b. Commitment of regular Chinese Communist forces  
in organized units?
  4. A possible Chinese Communist belief that a more  
aggressive course in Indochina might bring UN or US  
retaliation, including an air campaign, against the  
China mainland?

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- a. Substantially increased assistance to the Viet Minh, possibly including Chinese manpower in Viet Minh units?
- b. Commitment of regular Chinese Communist forces in organized units?
- 5. A significant improvement in the French-Vietnamese military and political position in Indochina?
- 6. Indications of French weakening of will to resist because of the economic and military strains on metropolitan France involved in a long-term and indecisive war in Indochina?
- 7. Developments elsewhere in Southeast Asia (for example, Burma) favorable to the Communists.
- 8. Developments outside of Southeast Asia.
- 9. International Communist strategy.

**II. INDICATIONS OF CURRENT CHINESE COMMUNIST INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO INDOCHINA**

G-2, ONI  
and A-2

- A. What indications may be derived from Communist military activity in Communist China and within Indochina?
- B. What indications may be derived from non-military events in the Far East such as Communist (Soviet, Chinese Communist, Viet Minh) propaganda, the movement and change of status

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of Communist leaders, and the formation of joint Viet  
Minh-Chinese Communist cultural and/or military  
organizations?

**III. PROBABLE DEVELOPMENTS IN INDOCHINA THROUGH MID-1952**

(To be prepared by O/NE based on I and II above)